

**ORIGINATOR: CHIEF CONSTABLE**

**PAPER NO: AP22/25**

**SUBMITTED TO: ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL –  
13 MAY 2022**

**SUBJECT: TACKLING SERIOUS VIOLENCE**

**SUMMARY:**

1. This report will explain the Constabulary's approach to Tackling Serious Violence. It details the current performance, demand and activity with the inclusion of statistical information where relevant.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. The Police and Crime Commissioner considers the report content, acknowledges the identified risks and raises issues (as appropriate) with the Chief Constable.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Tackling serious violence features as a Constabulary commitment within the Police and Crime Plan and as a priority within the Chief Constable's Force Strategic Plan, 2020 - 2023.
- 1.2 It is recognised that the Constabulary's response to offences involving serious violence is imperative to protecting the public, supporting victims and establishing wider trust, confidence and satisfaction in our service.
- 1.3 Whilst Rape and Serious Sexual Offences and domestic abuse could be included within the Serious Violence criteria, these offences are reported on separately and therefore activity relative to these offence types is not fully covered in this report. More detailed reference is however made to actions we are taking to tackle broader offences involving violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- 1.4 The primary offences this report refers to are as follows:
- S18 Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH);
  - S20 Wounding;
  - S47 Actual Bodily Harm (ABH);
  - Robbery;
  - County Lines drug offences.

## **2. GOVERNANCE**

- 2.1 There are a number of cross cutting activities relevant to the response to Serious Violence which feature in our approach to seeking continuous improvements in broader crime management performance. In particular the constabulary continues to pursue actions which will enhance victim support, offender management, use of protective measures and improvement of investigation standards.
- 2.2 Governance of our response to serious violence is provided through a number of performance and continuous improvement boards operating both internally, as well as in partnership with stakeholders. Key governance processes as relate to serious violence are summarised as follows:-
- Rape and Serious Sexual Offence operational delivery and improvement boards (police only and joint with CPS, regional forces);
  - Violent Crime Delivery Board;
  - Domestic Abuse Continuous Improvement Board;
  - VAWG steering group and Suffolk Violence and Abuse Partnership (SVAP), Safer Stronger Communities Board (see Paragraph 9 for a more detailed summary of VAWG governance);
  - Child Protection Delivery Board;
  - Joint Norfolk and Suffolk Investigation Improvement Boards and Suffolk Constabulary's Operation Investigate initiative;
  - Constabulary Vulnerability Board;
  - Joint Norfolk and Suffolk Offender Management Working Group;
  - Joint Norfolk and Suffolk Victim Support Working Group;
  - Joint Norfolk and Suffolk Civil Powers Working Group;

- Eastern Region Strategic Governance Groups (Commodities and Vulnerability)

### **3. VIOLENT CRIME DELIVERY BOARD**

3.1 A violent crime delivery board was introduced in 2021 and is led by the Constabulary's Head of Crime. It is the primary mechanism for co-ordinating activity to tackle serious violence with support from senior representatives from County Policing Command, Safeguarding and Investigations and SBOS (Analytical support).

3.2 The Board works to a Delivery Plan encompassing five themes:

- Governance, Strategic Approach and Partnership Working;
- Performance;
- Communications and Training;
- Local Delivery;
- VAWG (crime oversight other than Domestic Abuse/Rape and Serious Sexual Offences).

Key activities include:

- Maximising the use of the Child Exploitation Vulnerability Tracker (CEVT). This contains details of children who may get caught up in gang violence. It details their vulnerability, prevention activities and which partner agencies are involved;
- Development of a violent crime performance dashboard. The first version is now available on the force INSIGHT platform with further developments planned to ensure greater functionality to support operational leads;
- Focus on Out of Court disposals and improving the use of Restorative Justice where appropriate;
- Monitoring and review of HMIC publications with regard to thematic findings and identification of best practice;
- Review of deployment plans regarding Night Time Economy (NTE) policing;
- Appointment of Senior Investigating Officers to address significant series;
- Problem Solving Plans added to all relevant Commissioned Profiles at the Force Tactical Tasking Coordination Group (FTTCG).

### **4. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW – SERIOUS VIOLENCE**

4.1 There has been a 2.9% increase in violence with injury offences over the last 12 months compared to the long-term average.

4.2 The County has seen an increase in serious violence of 17.8% (+66 offences) when compared to the previous 12-month period. However, this is largely an expected increase as the County has emerged out of lockdown and in particular as a consequence of the night-time economy (NTE) re-opening following extended periods of lockdown during 2020 and 2021.

4.3 For reasons outlined, caution should be exercised when seeking to compare recent increases in volumes of violent crime, particularly in comparison with the preceding two years affected by the COVID pandemic.

4.4 It is also important to note that Suffolk is one of 32 force areas in England and Wales which have experienced increases in most serious violence set against the preceding 12 months, with all but two of our most similar forces reporting similar increases in serious violence over the same period.

- 4.5 Suffolk Constabulary's solved rate for violence with injury offences over the last 12 months is 14.7% and this represents a decrease of 2.9% compared with the long-term average. There remains a significant amount of activity across the constabulary to improve investigative standards via training and there are well established audit and scrutiny processes to maximise efforts to achieve positive outcomes. Work to improve investigative standards will continue and is a priority for both Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies.
- 4.6 The Constabulary's Violent Crime Delivery Board has commissioned more detailed analysis of violent crime over the longer term (5 years) with a view to establishing a more informed understanding of trends over this period. This includes analytical reporting relevant to:
- Volume of violent crime categories over the longer term;
  - Identification of Violent crime 'hotspots', including that which differentiates between private/residential and public locations;
  - Broader trends in victim profiles (age, sex, nationality, ethnicity);
  - Establishing patterns in respect of repeat offenders/victims;
  - Comparison with most similar forces;
  - Identifiable best practice.
- 4.7 The most serious cases of violence continue to be remitted to detective resource to investigate, and it is notably apparent that there are increasingly positive outcomes being delivered as a consequence of formalising our approach to allocating high risk domestic abuse offences to PIP2 trained resource (policy effective from December 2021). These outcomes will be reported separately as required.

## **5. ROBBERY**

- 5.1 The Constabulary continues to prioritise the investigation of robbery offences, using detective resource to ensure consistency in response and to maximise opportunities to solve crimes.
- 5.2 There has been a 28.5% decrease in robbery offences over the last 12 months compared to the long-term average.
- 5.3 Whilst there has been a recent increase in offences, there has not been a return to pre pandemic levels.
- 5.4 The solve rate for robbery for the preceding 12 months is 18.7% which represents a 1.7% increase set against the longer-term average for this crime type.
- 5.5 Force Robbery Plan

A Force Robbery Plan was created in 2019. Key activity associated with this plan which has contributed to improved performance includes: -

- Operation SHERE (Southern area) was run successfully. This activity provided an ability to disrupt and investigate robbery pre-cursor offences such as theft from the person;
- Exploitation of enhanced DNA capability which has led to the identification of suspects which would previously been missed. Targeted DNA work on pockets / bag handles is now proving beneficial;
- An offender focused approach, targeting the individuals who are capable of or whom have previously committed robbery offences (especially series offending). This takes the form

of visits when coming out of prison and awareness briefings and taskings for local policing personnel;

- The greatest success has come from CID taking early offences and pursuing for remand/charges where appropriate;
- Delivery of training to new Sergeants on the 'Golden Hour' principles and Street Identification procedure;
- The introduction of Digital Support Officers (DSO) has been a significant success. DSOs are able to conduct fast time CCTV trawls / capture and assist with digital downloads. This ability to quickly identify and obtain admissible evidence is vital to the early identification and arrest of suspect;
- The Force Robbery Plan is now being reviewed and refreshed by an assigned thematic operational lead.

## **6. KNIFE CRIME**

- 6.1 The Violent Crime Delivery Board oversees activity to counter the threat of knife crime. Work is ongoing to ensure that local hospitals are consistently referring suspected serious violence related admissions to police, not least potential knife crime related offences.

### Operation SCEPTRE

- 6.2 Op SCEPTRE is a national initiative focussing on 'weeks of action' in relation to knife crime. Suffolk play a full role in this initiative. Recent results include:

#### April 2021

- Seven arrests;
- Successful warrants where knives were seized;
- Intelligence led stop searches;
- High visibility patrols in partnership with the British Transport Police;
- Schools Liaison Officers and Community Engagement Officers supported 19+ events in schools and colleges;
- 22 weapons sweeps occurred, 7 knives recovered;
- 250+ knives and bladed items were recovered from the knife surrender amnesty bins.

#### November 2021

- 12 arrests;
- 14 schools visited;
- High Vis patrols;
- Visits to knife retailers;
- 495 knives/bladed weapons surrendered throughout the week (amnesty).

### Operation ASSURANCE

- 6.3 Operation UCHEE was initially set up between Border Force and Metropolitan Police to manage the importation of Legal Knives to improve intelligence picture and highlight risk to which Police would otherwise be unaware.

- 6.4 Operation ASSURANCE is the Suffolk response. There is now a process in place for receipt of information / intelligence and for proactive activity following receipt.

## **7. COUNTY LINES**

- 7.1 County Lines refers to drug dealers from Metropolitan areas who conduct their business in the shire counties such as Suffolk. The business is conducted by mobile phones and often uses local drug users to facilitate the activity. On occasions this includes the use of 'cuckooing', the taking over of a local drug users house to act as a base for the dealing. This is often associated with serious violence.

- 7.2 Operation OROCHI is Metropolitan police led initiative, whereby information and tactics are shared with county forces. The aim is to identify and arrest the individual controlling the relevant mobile phone. Suffolk Constabulary's Serious Crime Disruption Teams (SCDT) take on this responsibility and since May 2020 they have achieved significant successes including:

- 27 County Lines enforced (20 operating in Ipswich);
- 32 Line Holders of County Lines arrested and charged;
- 17 Line Holders of County Lines convicted and sentenced;
- 92 years in prison sentences for Line Holders;
- 6 Line Holders awaiting sentence after pleading guilty;
- 3 Serious Crime Prevention Orders obtained;
- 3 Line Holders charged with Modern Slavery offences;

## **8. COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS**

- 8.1 Campaigns during 2021 include:

- Violence Against the Person campaign – 10/05/21 – 14/05/21;
- Launch of project to better understand women's experience of violence 19/05/21;
- Launch of Home Office Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 20/07/21
- Community Reassurance article released to public (following Wayne Couzens conviction) 02/11/21;
- White Ribbon campaign, a charity that is seeking to end male violence towards women 25/11/21;
- Op SCEPTRE weeks of action.

- 8.2 It is recognised that effective communication is key to maintaining victim satisfaction and public confidence. This is a key theme in our violent crime delivery plan (as stated in paragraph 3.2) and VAWG action plan.

## **9. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

- 9.1 There is a strong and well-established partnership approach to tackling VAWG in Suffolk, with governance and support provided at a multi-agency executive level (Safer Stronger Communities Board). The following two slides summarise VAWG leadership, governance and partnership structures in Suffolk.

## 8. Governance

We are fortunate to have strong partnerships across Suffolk that work together to address a number of key community safety issues which cause the greatest risk, threat and harm. Specifically, our priority to tackle VAWG is underpinned by robust governance that brings together the voice of victims and survivors, practitioners, service providers, decision makers and elected members.

- **Safer & Stronger Communities Board (SSCB)**

is responsible for providing strategic direction and leadership on wider issues and determinants arising from agreed priorities. Members include Chief Officers and Elected members from Suffolk County Council, District & Borough Councils, Police, Police & Crime Commissioner, Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership, Community Safety Partnerships, Health, Probation, Criminal Justice Board.

- **Violence Against Women & Girls Steering Group**

is responsible for co-ordinating and developing quality services to effectively meet the needs of Suffolk residents. This includes direct service provision for victims-survivors, perpetrators, and their children, holding abusers to account and reducing the prevalence of VAWG. Membership includes strategic managers from Adult and Children Safeguarding, Community Safety & Public Health Police, Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, Probation, Health, Voluntary & Community Sector.

- **Suffolk Violence & Abuse Partnership (SVAP)**

is an information sharing network established to strengthen collaboration and encourage innovation across the Suffolk system. Membership includes 180+ interested individuals with a personal or organisational interest in Violence Against Women and Girls, including; victim/survivors; voluntary and community sector providers; academics; military; volunteers; By and For services; and elected members.

- **Domestic Abuse Partnership Board**

functions are undertaken by both the VAWG Steering Group and SVAP as above and are responsible for assessing the scale and nature of need, preparing and publishing a domestic abuse accommodation strategy, commissioning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on progress.

For more information on the community safety governance structure in Suffolk please see [Appendix B](#).

# “Awareness and education is paramount”



Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Survivor

**SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES BOARD (SSCB)**



**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS STEERING GROUP**

(PART OF THE LOCAL DOMESTIC ABUSE PARTNERSHIP BOARD)

**SUFFOLK VIOLENCE AND ABUSE PARTNERSHIP (SVAP)**

(PART OF THE LOCAL DOMESTIC ABUSE PARTNERSHIP BOARD)

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dialogue from the VAWG steering group into SVAP and greater accountability in decision making and strategic direction.

- 9.7 Suffolk Constabulary's Assistant Chief Constable is the Chief Officer lead. The Head of Crime Safeguarding and Incident Management (CSIM) is the strategic lead for VAWG with overarching responsibility for operational delivery.
- 9.8 It is important to note that Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) and Domestic Abuse (DA) Continuous Improvement Boards are particularly well established, and both are integral for addressing a significant proportion of most serious VAWG related crime. RASSO and DA Continuous Improvement Boards will continue to be the principal mechanism for improving service delivery for VAWG for reasons outlined, but additional scrutiny and oversight for all non DA/RASSO – VAWG, will be provided by the constabulary's Violent Crime Delivery Board.
- 9.9 Suffolk Constabulary's County Policing Commander provides governance for response and local policing functions delivered via three superintendent area commanders. There is good connectivity between area commands and community safety partnerships.
- 9.10 The Neighbourhood Policing Team in the Western Area takes the lead for licencing, particularly focusing on vulnerability in the night time economy - improving relationships, education, and awareness raising with licensees. The Constabulary is currently trialling the Licencing Security and Vulnerability Initiative (SAVI) in Ipswich to support our licenced premises in taking ownership of vulnerability by identifying and improving areas of concern.
- 9.11 The Constabulary is working closely with licencing authorities and partners to support safer and well-educated licenced premises, empowering premises to introduce their own harm prevention measures.
- 9.12 The Constabulary NHP Licencing web page provides detailed information for officers to report into the team. All activities are coordinated onto the "Innkeeper" database which provides a RAG status of each premises, exposing high harm/risk locations and the work on going to mitigate. The Licencing Team are proactive in working with the licencing authority ensuring enforcement activities are pursued where breaches are identified.
- 9.13 High Harm locations feature on Night Economy (NTE) briefings to officers and bids support additional resourcing through targeted patrols under "Op Engage". These include liaison and multi-agency activity and engagement with Street Pastors, Security industry Association (SIA) staff, business owners and community safety partners.
- 9.14 For larger venues, Design Out Crime Officers (DOCOs) will work with owners to survey the venue and provide detailed crime prevention reports.
- 9.15 The National Streetsafe initiative forms part of our partnership approach to VAWG. The data provided helps to identify hotspot areas for vulnerability which are then discussed in the partnership setting to address key issues. The data is also used in conjunction with our Neighbourhood profiles and KIN data to help understand some of the deeper causes for the vulnerabilities and how they are associated to other influencing factors e.g. socio-economic.. The Constabulary is in effect taking a problem-solving approach to these issues. The Constabulary has a dedicated webpage to this data.
- 9.16 The 1<sup>st</sup> Principle Constabulary website has been set up to provide specific crime prevention and safety advice in respect of a variety of crime types and situations. In respect of VAWG, this is covered through advice on personal safety, spiking, domestic abuse, criminal exploitation and criminal justice (victims and witnesses).

- 9.17 VAWG as a subject is included into a wide variety of different delivery plans, for example Op Facilitate – the Constabulary Christmas resourcing plans; the Constabulary summer demand plans; and the Constabulary drugs delivery plan, where the Constabulary is currently extending drug testing on arrest to domestic related offences. VAWG activity is promoted through Area and Force Tasking Meetings, through which particular high harm vulnerabilities are raised and additional resourcing is discussed.

## **10. OFFENDER MANAGEMENT**

- 10.1 A recent Accountability and Performance Panel report in March 2022 entitled Managing Offenders and Reducing Reoffending provides a detailed overview of the Constabulary's position with regards to offender management covering the following areas:-

- Managing Offenders Subgroup;
- Custody and Offender Diversion;
- Bail Management Team;
- Restorative Justice;
- Suffolk's Domestic Abuse (DA) Perpetrator Scheme;
- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA);
- Wanted Persons Processes;
- Integrated Offender Management.

- 10.2 In addition to the position statement provided by the paper referred to, the following summarises additional information of relevance to force progress and ambition for offender management. This is critical to effectively tackling serious violence.

### **10.3 Analytical Support Tools**

#### **V-VOL**

The V-VOL (Vulnerability – Victims, Offenders, Locations) is a analytical dashboard that enables the constabulary to actively manage and target the most dangerous and prolific perpetrators. It utilises the 'Cambridge Harm Index' to produce hierarchical data by level of harm / threat. V-VOL functionality allows for a 'drill down' profile for each offender when requested. This enables the targeted management of offenders for each of the areas within the constabulary.

#### **Power-BI – suspects dashboard**

The Constabulary has also developed an Outstanding Suspects Dashboard using software that will allow officers to view a list of the current outstanding suspects. This will assist with effectively prioritising the most dangerous or persistent offenders using a crime severity scoring mechanism.

### **10.4 Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Unit**

The Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Unit (DAPU) consists of one Police Officer and two Behaviour Change Caseworkers (BCC) who have been working setting up the team and the programme since October 2020. They have established working relationships with core support agencies, publicising the programme and its benefits to encourage referrals of families and individuals who are willing for support and wanting to change their behaviours regarding all aspects and areas of domestic abuse.

The respect programme that is offered by DAPU is voluntary and delivered on a 1-2-1 basis with a dedicated BCC who will look at the specific areas that are a cause of offending for each family and individual and tailor make the programme to their requirements. This allows the perpetrator to really focus on the specific areas that affect them most, they are able to speak openly and without judgement from any others and be guided by the BCC. They can also offer support with the use of interpreters which currently isn't possible during group sessions therefore making behaviour change work accessible for all.

DAPU are now moving into their second year. With the very first behaviour change session starting this time last year, good progress has been made, delivering effective change:

- 40 perpetrators have joined the programme since January 2021;
- 6 months is the average time taken to complete the programme;
- 11 current active cases at various stages of the programme;
- 8 perpetrators await entry to the programme or are in the process of joining;
- 324 Behaviour Change one-to-one sessions were delivered;
- 7 perpetrators have completed the programme in full.

The University of Suffolk have recently been commissioned to assist in an evaluation of the programme, the outcome of which is expected by the end of Summer 2022.

#### 10.5 Integrated Offender Management

The Integrated Offender Management Scheme is a National Initiative which is locally known as the 180 Team. The team works to protect the public from offending and reduce demand on policing resources by working with partners to provide prolific harmful offenders with the opportunity to break away from the cycle of offending.

The team works with offenders in conjunction the National Probation Service through a number of pathways which are proven to contribute to the cycle of offending. This includes accommodation, substance misuse, debt and finance, mental and physical health, family and relationships, thinking skills, education and training, and associates.

Offenders on the scheme are identified by referrals into the scheme and an assessment based on their offending history, information and intelligence held on police systems, complexity of needs, and the risks they present, is undertaken to ascertain their suitability for adoption.

Suffolk has a total of 108 offenders on the cohort consisting of 7 females and 101 males, with 47 in prison, and 61 outside of prison.

### 11. **PROTECTIVE MEASURES**

11.1 In 2021 a Detective Chief Inspector was appointed to lead improvements to the Constabulary's operational use of ancillary orders and protective measures. This is recognised as key to managing offenders and tackling all forms of criminality not least from perpetrators of serious violence.

11.2 A newly created joint Norfolk and Suffolk Civil Orders Working Group has been established. Monthly meetings are held with command leads to monitor progress in relation to Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPN)/Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) and Stalking Prevention Orders (SPOs) and ancillary orders. This ensures best practise is shared and alignment between force approaches is achieved.

- 11.3 Single Points of Contact have now been identified for respective preventative orders across both Norfolk and Suffolk and work is ongoing through the civil orders delivery group to drive performance improvement including through:
- Athena Recording – Accurate Recording of Civil Orders;
  - Management of Orders;
  - Awareness Raising & Guidance (including the Development of a composite civil orders/protective powers toolkit);
  - Performance Data.
- 11.4 In late 2021, Suffolk County Council Legal Services delivered presentations on Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs), Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) and Stalking Protection Orders within the Constabulary.
- 11.5 Guidance material on Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPN), Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) and Stalking Protection Orders has been created and has been promoted force wide.
- 11.6 In January and February of 2022, the constabulary's Detective Superintendent lead for investigation improvement delivered training sessions to all sergeants and inspectors on matters pertaining to investigation standards, including a requirement to improve the awareness and use of ancillary orders.
- 11.7 Awareness raising and guidance will continue to be a focus for both Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies and further activity will be co-ordinated via the joint civil orders working group.
- 11.8 Performance in relation to Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPN), Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO's) and Stalking Protection Orders is now routinely monitored with monthly data being utilised. There has been a demonstrable improvement in use of key preventative measures namely Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPN), Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) and Stalking Protection Orders over the last 12 months.
- 11.9 Pre April 2021 the constabulary had not obtained any Stalking Prevention Orders, to date we have now secured 16 orders.
- 11.10 In 6 months from July to December 2021, the following orders were obtained.

Domestic Violence Prevention Notice (DVPN)	26
Domestic Violence Prevention Order (DVPO)	25
Sexual Risk Order (SRO)	0
Sexual Harm Prevention Order (SHPO)	38
Full Stalking Protection Order (SPO)	12
Interim Stalking Protection Order (SPO)	0
Restraining Order (TRO & FRO)	97
Non-molestation Order (NMO)	54

Forced Marriage Protection Order (FMPO)	0
Female Genital Mutilation Protection Order (FGMPO)	0
Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Order (STPO)	1
Slavery and Trafficking Risk Order (STRO)	0
Violent Offender Order (VOO)	0
Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO)	0
Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO)	4
Community Protection Notice (CPN)	21
Civil Injunctions	0
Banning Orders	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>278</b>

## **12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 None

## **13. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

13.1 The current levels of experienced PIP2 detectives remains a concern. Whilst the fast-track Detective Entry Scheme has been a success; the net result is a steady erosion of experience over a sustained period. Op UPLIFT resulted in a number of departments (and partner LEA such as ERSOU) increasing their establishment of detectives. Given that none of these entities recruit new officers, their uplift has continued to impact on the loss of experienced detectives operating within CID and safeguarding investigation teams.

13.2 2021 saw the introduction of DG6, a set of new instructions from the Director General relating to disclosure. This combined with a number of new CPS requirements relating to ATHENA cases has made file completion for charging significantly more complicated and time consuming. Whilst our detectives have adopted all of the new requirements, it should be noted that there is a noticeable continuing decrease in morale and confidence in their individual ability to complete an investigation within acceptable time limits. CSIM has its own wellbeing plan which addresses some of these issues, however this and associated operational demand is such that recruitment and retention of detectives remains an ongoing and significant challenge both locally and nationally.